

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend Paragraph 12, page 3, as follows:

[0012] As seen from Fig. 2, a swage or necked-down region 200 of shaft section 102 is placed intermediate the section's two ends and provides for a weakened area of shaft section 102 which is more susceptible to bending or buckling about area 200 than any other portion along the axial length of section 102. Region 200 comprises a tapered section 202 extending from a smaller diameter portion 103A of shaft section 102 to a larger diameter portion 103B of Section 102.

Please amend Paragraph 13, page 3, as follows:

[1013] As shown in phantom outline form in Fig. 2, when an axial load is applied to the propeller shaft from the left as viewed in Fig. 2, section 102 absorbs the energy of this load by buckling about weakened area 200 as shown. With this approach, substantially all of the energy is absorbed in the front section 102 and section 104 is thereby isolated from the effects of the axial load. For this reason, section 104 will remain substantially stationary even under an axial load at the front end of the propeller shaft system and can therefore be placed in proximity to or be at least partially surrounded by vehicular components such as a fuel tank 106 as shown in Fig. 1.